

A
C H A R G E

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY OF HIS DIOCESE,

BY

JOHN, LORD BISHOP OF NOVA SCOTIA,

AT HALIFAX, IN AUGUST, 1829;

AT BERMUDAS, IN MAY, 1830;

AND AT FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK,

IN AUGUST, 1830.

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TO THE
CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA,

THE FOLLOWING

C H A R G E,

PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH THE SINCEREST ESTEEM AND REGARD,

AND WITH FERVENT PRAYERS FOR THEIR USEFULNESS

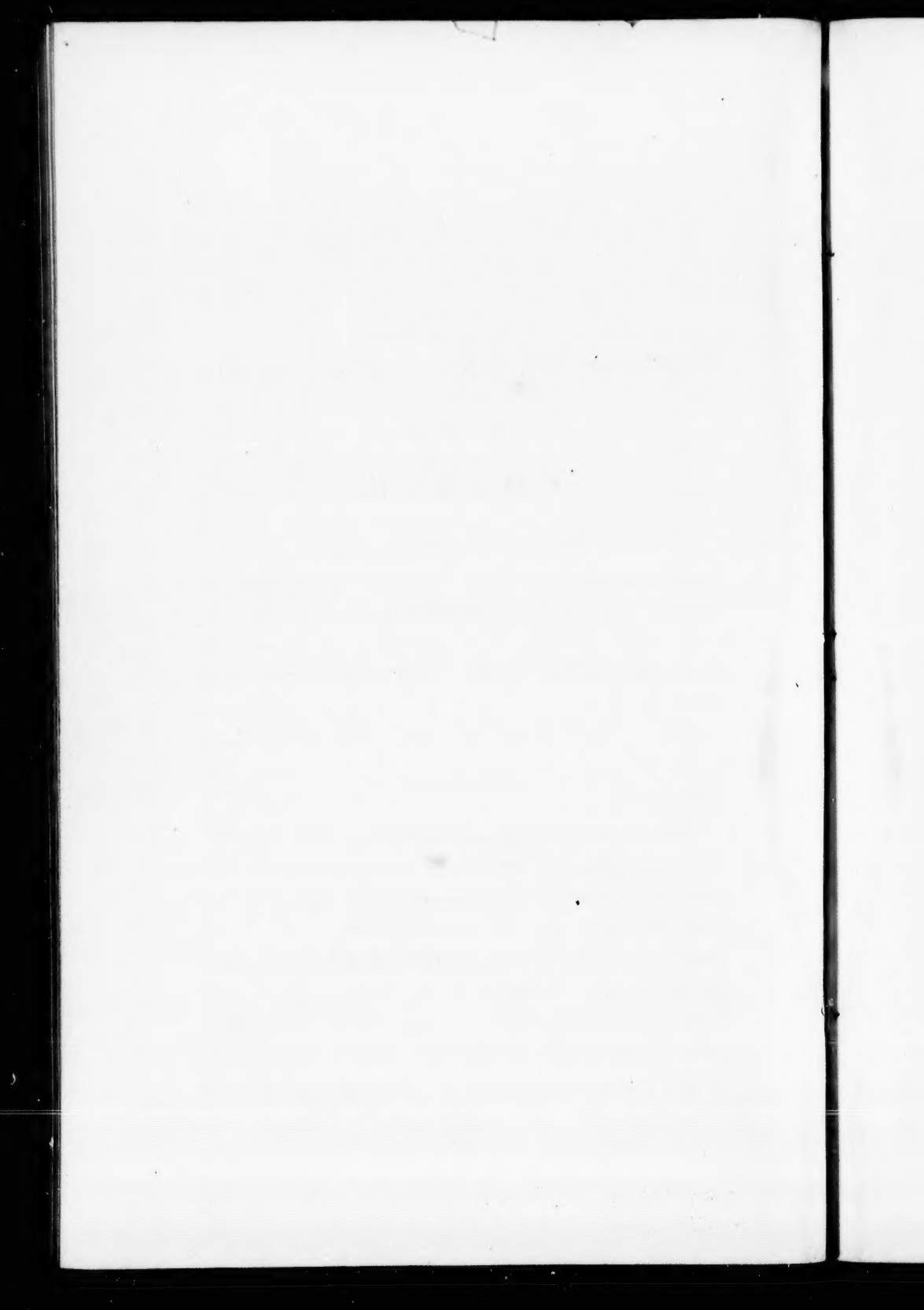
AND HAPPINESS,

BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND,

AND AFFECTIONATE BROTHER,

JOHN NOVA SCOTIA.

1102936



A
CHARGE,
&c.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE advantages that may reasonably be expected from a general meeting of the Clergy, are too obvious to require enumeration, and much too important to be lightly regarded. Being fully sensible of their value, I feel it to be alike due to you, and to myself, to explain the causes which have delayed our assembling together until the present time.

It is known to many, perhaps to all of you, that in consequence of the bodily infirmities of the late amiable Prelate who preceded me, the whole of this extensive diocese had been deprived of the presence of its Diocesan for several years; and many remote portions of it, though rapidly increasing in population and importance, had never been visited by a Bishop. More than sixty Churches, scattered over an immense space, were unconsecrated; and nearly seven thousand per-

sons were waiting for Confirmation. It appeared, therefore, to be a primary duty to attend to such pressing wants; and in the discharge of this duty, almost every portion of the diocese has been personally visited.

Such visits certainly afforded the most effectual means for useful intercourse with each of the Clergy, in the midst of his immediate charge, and for acquiring a local knowledge of every parish, and every mission. The value of this knowledge and intercourse has already been felt, and always will be, in every future communication with the Clergy, respecting their several churches and congregations, and whatever may affect their usefulness in their respective stations. But these visits, so expedient and desirable, evidently diminished the necessity for an early call of the Clergy to meet in a body; and by the full occupation they occasioned, plainly rendered it impossible.

Another reason will readily be thought deserving of all the influence which has been allowed to it. The Clergy in these Provinces are dispersed over so great an extent of country, that no considerable portion of them can be assembled in one place, without shutting up many churches, and, in some cases, for several weeks. To most of you this fact must be obvious; and if a stranger should require evidence, a letter which I have just received, would supply it. It comes from a very respectable Missionary, in a distant part of this

Province, and requests permission to be absent from us on this day, because he could not come, without the risk of shutting up two churches, and depriving several congregations of the benefit of public worship for *seven weeks*. Nor is this the only case in which such request has been made, on this ground¹.

There is a third reason to which *I* am bound

¹ Although in my first address to a Clergy, epdeared to me by a knowledge of their general excellence, and by long and intimate and affectionate intercourse with many of them, I could not inflict upon myself the pain of uttering any thing which might seem to convey reproof, I may now add a kindly caution in a note.

By admitting the absence of a Missionary from his proper station, to form a reasonable ground for the delay and unfrequency of so important a measure as the assembling of the Clergy, for mutual information, and counsel, and encouragement, the Missionaries will more readily enter into my anxiety to guard them against any indifference to so great an evil, which has certainly been too frequently inflicted upon some congregations in this diocese. This has sometimes occurred, I am satisfied, from a mistaken view of duty; but if the evil were duly weighed, with all its consequences, the Clergyman would seldom be induced to leave his own church *unserved*, even if he should be enabled to officiate in some other, not under his immediate care. And whenever the seeming occasion for such absence *as will leave his churches without the services of a Clergyman* should arise, he would not think the rule too rigorous, which requires that his Diocesan or Archdeacon should be allowed to judge of the necessity for the absence, and withhold his consent as an *act of duty* if the case should not appear to him to be urgent.

to give consideration, although your kindness and readiness to attend to the call that is made upon you, might induce *You* to underrate it. I mean the personal inconvenience, which several of yourselves must sustain, by a long, and perhaps expensive, absence from your homes and families.

If therefore I should have seemed to those, who set a just value upon a general meeting of the Clergy, to have been tardy in requesting your attendance in a body, the delay will not appear to have occurred without substantial cause. And hereafter, especially while it shall please God to enable me to repeat my visits to every portion of my charge, if you should not be assembled as frequently as the Clergy of a less extensive diocese are accustomed to meet, you will be aware of the reasons which may induce, in this particular, some departure from the more general usage. But we shall all agree in the conviction, that if our general meetings are less frequent than would be desirable under other circumstances, we are bound to more earnest endeavours, and more fervent prayers, that they may be made, by the blessing of God, more profitable to all of us whenever they occur.

Under this conviction, and with a very serious impression of the awful responsibilities of our office, and with fervent prayers for that blessing from the great Lord and Master of us all, which alone can give success and value to any endeavours of his imperfect creatures, it is my earnest

desire, my beloved brethren, that this first assembling of ourselves together should be made humbly instrumental to the glory of God; to our own improvement; and to the eternal benefit of those for whom we labour.

In adverting, as I shall have occasion to advert, to the duties of your office, and to the manner in which they ought to be discharged, you will not suppose that I regard you as more in need than myself of being excited to activity and zeal. Such are our weakness and imperfections, that *every one of us* requires to be *put in remembrance*, even of the most important duties that can engage the heart, *although we know them, and may be established in the truth of them*, that whatever gift we have received from God may be stirred up.

You have an admirable epitome of all that is required from you in that solemn office of the Church, by which, through God's assistance, you were set apart for the work of the ministry. That engaging service, and the portions of Scripture on which it is grounded, contain at once the fullest and the plainest instruction in the nature, and consequence, and obligation of the duties that are laid upon you; and the most prevailing encouragement to the faithful and zealous discharge of them.

The high dignity, the weighty importance, the solemn responsibility of the ministerial office, are there most beautifully and most forcibly illustrated;

and the necessity for deeply serious views of such an office are most strongly impressed. The need for cultivating an unceasing spirit of devotion, and of spiritual affections and desires, is there emphatically enforced. The indispensable obligation to diligent study and complete knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as the great treasury from whence every thing that is *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*, may be brought forth, is displayed and enforced with an eloquence that must reach the heart.

Conscious of the value of the instruction, which is so entirely within your reach, I have made it a custom to exhort all whom I ordain, never to lose sight of the ordination service; and to devote at least one day in the year, the anniversary of their own ordination, to the solemn review of its obligations, with holy meditation and fervent prayer. I would hope that *all* my brethren in the ministry are sensible of the importance of such review, and that they will consider the present occasion as especially inviting us to it. And here again let me repeat my wish to be identified with yourselves, and assure you that I have not ventured upon this recommendation to you, until I had first reviewed, with solemn seriousness, the obligations which were laid upon myself, when I received the authority by which you are now addressed.

1. Personal holiness, and a godly example to others, are among the primary requisites in the character of the Christian minister. Where these are wanting, even the solemnity of our office, and the authority with which it invests us, however great in themselves, will seldom be regarded by others. Nor can we be surprised at this, although we must lament the disrespect that is thus improperly excited towards the *Commission* we hold, which is not annulled, nor inherently weakened, by unworthiness in the officer who bears it. But the general proneness to this disrespect, however erroneous, should be used as an additional incentive to the acquisition of that soundness in the faith, that purity of heart, and that exemplary holiness, which ought, at all times, to distinguish the immediate servants of an unerring, and infinitely pure and holy God. These can never be maintained if we cease to look up with humble hope and confidence to the pattern of all righteousness; and we may assure ourselves, that unless such hope and confidence be continually cherished and upheld, the most diligent shepherd in our fold must encounter difficulties that will discourage his exertions, and diminish his usefulness. There are peculiarities in our situation which indispensably require the constant exercise of a most discreet and active zeal, with unceasing care to adorn our profession by the innocence of our lives. They require us

to be well grounded ourselves, and to labour diligently that those also who are committed to our care should be firmly established in the faith, and in the sound principles of that apostolic branch of the Church of Christ, in which we have received our commission. They unite, with other considerations of universal importance, in exhibiting the necessity likewise of guarding most scrupulously against those partial views of the Gospel and its doctrines, which lead to dangerous error; and for discouraging that proneness to departure from established truth, and to unrestrained diversity of opinion, which have been fruitful sources of party spirit, and eat, like a canker, into Christian love and unity.

2. In the discharge of your public duties, nothing can be more desirable than an immediate sense of the importance of every thing you utter. This, indeed, must be deeply felt by yourselves, if you would wish it to be felt by those who hear you. Such feeling will encourage a love of propriety and consistency, even in matters, apparently of lower consequence, as well as in those of higher moment. In a regularly constituted Church there should be an uniformity of practice in all things. If this were rightly considered, we should not have to complain of the numerous instances of disregard to the plain directions of the Rubric, which unhappily are very common, and perhaps to an extent, of which the persons

themselves who disregard them, are unconscious¹. These things may be thought unimportant, but it should be recollected that a neglect of any one authoritative direction naturally leads to carelessness, and disregard of other injunctions—and these will surely extend from the minister to the congregation, who have their part to perform in the public service, and should be encouraged to a performance of it, by the uniform example, as well as the advice of their spiritual teacher. It may be added that *every* duty of our office will always be better performed, as it may be more in unison with the *letter* as well as the spirit of the Church's directions. It will not, therefore, be too much to hope that every Clergyman will frequently review all these directions for his guidance in the daily service, and in the other offices of the Church.

3. All her services are at once so beautiful, and so forcible, that a clear and articulate pronuncia-

¹ It can hardly be necessary to point to the many instances in which a disregard of the Rubric may often be observed. There may, perhaps, be clergymen who have not read its directions for many years, and it is scarcely possible that such should avoid neglect of them. The daily lessons are frequently given out in a manner different from that which is enjoined, and many perhaps must now turn to the Rubric before they can be conscious of this diversity. Additional attention might be attracted to these directions, if, as formerly, they should now be printed in red letter; but the clergyman should not require this to insure his diligent attention to them.

tion, with simplicity of manner, and an humble and impressive feeling of their aptness, and purity, and holiness, is all that is required from the reader. Every thing artificial in the manner of uttering them is discordant from their spirit, and inherent eloquence. Let the minister, in reading them, be an humble suppliant from his heart, and many of his people will pray with him, in a spirit that will not be rejected by the Great Searcher of Hearts.

4. From the public prayers of the Church we naturally turn to the family and private devotions, in which the faithful shepherd in the Lord's fold should be continually exercised. All his engagements are calculated to make him feel the value of appeals to heaven, and to fill him with the love and with the spirit of prayer. Every employment of his profession brings him into immediate connection with the things of God ; and the Christian minister, above all persons, should realise in every hour of his life, the extreme necessity for the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit. He should never enter upon any act of public or private duty to his flock, or to any individual member of it, without commending himself and his work to the direction and blessing of God.— There should be an habitual rising of his heart in humble dependence and hope to the Author of every mercy. He, above all others, should be distinguished by such submission and subjection of

his own will as may prompt him in every undertaking, to desire and to pray that the plans of his erring judgment, even when best considered and most piously determined, may all be overruled by unerring wisdom, when they are not pleasing to God, or may be unsuitable or insufficient for their purposes, however clearly they may have been supposed to be proper and sufficient. Often will the devout servant of God, who is thus habitually exercised, discover the fallacy and the weakness of his apparently best intentions; and often will he see and gratefully acknowledge the mercy by which his own designs have been overruled and counteracted, and better means than he could ever suggest have been supplied for the accomplishment of his commendable inclinations. Habits of subjection and submission will also be so blest to their possessors as to assist in controlling that wandering of the mind in prayer which has filled many a pious heart with sorrow, and shame, and alarm. And certainly this weakness ought to be regarded as one of the most humiliating circumstances in the experience of a religious mind. It should make us feel the value of those ardent supplications for Divine mercy, which every service of the Church suggests to her children; and our use of these, in the sincerity of a full faith, should encourage our determined and unceasing struggles against so distressing an infirmity.

5. Your attention may next be requested to

that engaging and edifying portion of the service in which we offer up our praise by holy spiritual Psalms. It was in early use among the people of God, and highly esteemed in the Apostolic age. It is now sometimes culpably neglected, and will seldom be sufficiently regarded unless it receive the earnest attention of the clergyman. Those who have suddenly passed from one congregation, where proper attention has been given to Psalmody, to another, where it has been neglected, will require no stimulus to their desire for improvement, wherever there is a deficiency in this particular. The difference in the whole spirit and influence of the public worship is greater than can easily be imagined by a person who has not witnessed it. Difficulties indeed may meet the clergyman in his attempt at improvement in this as in other objects; but if he give to it his time, his attention, his encouragement, and his prayers, the difficulties will be overcome or diminished, and improvement will be effected.

6. The duties of the pulpit will afford fruitful topics for observation. On the present occasion a few suggestions only will be offered.

It can hardly be necessary to press upon any of you, my brethren, I will not say the expediency, but the necessity, and paramount obligation, that is laid upon you, to urge from the pulpit, plainly, forcibly, and continually, the great and leading doctrines of the Gospel. In these we find that

knowledge of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, by which the great Apostle to the Gentiles was contented and determined to limit his information, when he visited the Corinthians—well knowing that it contained the sum and substance of the Gospel. These leading doctrines alone can reach the defects and sinfulness of the human heart, and these can alone supply the wants, and satisfy the desires of the soul that is devoutly anxious to serve its God.

The fall of man from original purity and righteousness, with all the awful consequences of that most appalling event; the total insufficiency of our own efforts for recovery—the consequent necessity for reconciliation with God by virtue of such atonement, as none other than a Divine Redeemer could effect; the fact of that stupendous atonement procuring pardon for sin, and the acceptance of the sinner; the necessity for the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit, leading by Divine grace to vital faith, and so producing real penitence of heart, and full amendment of life, and all the blessed fruits of godliness; aiding our infirmities; comforting and supporting us under the many trials of our earthly conflict, and preparing us for eternal rest and happiness, by sanctification of the whole heart and affections; are subjects that may well engage our thoughts and prompt our exertions, for they might exhaust the eloquence of angels. These things, therefore,

brethren, teach and exhort; and in teaching them, gladly avail yourselves of the powerful assistance of the Church, who in her appointed services, impressively reminds us of all the leading facts and doctrines of the Gospel.

It may not be improper to add a few suggestions, more especially for the younger part of the Clergy, in reference to the mode of preparing their sermons.

Although additional clearness, and force, and interest, may often be given to their addresses from the pulpit, by acknowledged quotations from eminent writers, I cannot omit to recommend that their sermons should be composed by themselves. I am aware of some difference of opinion on this point, among persons of equal respectability, and also of the advantages which are supposed to result from a partial use of the labours of others. But I am bound, upon the present occasion, to give you the best conclusion, to which my own judgment and experience have led me.

It is well known that the use of another's composition is generally attributed to incompetency or indolence, and therefore it must have a tendency to lessen respect for the clergyman, and so to diminish his influence. But there is a more forcible objection. Few persons can deliver the composition of another with that warmth of feeling with which the result of their own earnest efforts

for the benefit of their hearers will be uttered. A plain but earnest address from the heart of the preacher, will be more likely, with the blessing of God, to reach the hearts of his hearers, than the most finished composition that is borrowed from the writings of another.

But while I thus urge original composition as desirable, and perhaps as a duty, a few hints for its assistance may not be unacceptable to those who as yet have had but limited experience. The preacher should always be ready to avail himself of the various circumstances which may suggest subjects for his sermons. If he perceives a general deficiency in religious knowledge, or religious conduct, every page of his Bible will supply some topic that he ought to urge upon the attention of his flock. Neglect in any particular duties, or want of information on any particular doctrines or precepts, which may be discovered in his pastoral visits, and pastoral conversations, will afford most profitable subjects. The Psalms and Lessons, the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, will often supply the very matter that he wants. In all these the preacher should take care to be accurately informed, and his people should be encouraged to come to him, as to their best earthly friend, for an explanation of every difficulty that meets their endeavours to understand them. While informing himself, or assisting them, subjects for his discourses will be multiplied. It will be conve-

nient to determine upon the particular subject in good season. The passage of Scripture, which is to be explained or enforced, should be carefully compared with its parallels; and, where it can be done, with the original Scriptures and the several versions of them. The consideration of it should be deep and serious, accompanied by fervent and often-repeated prayer, for right direction and assistance, that the supplicant may be saved from error, or from leading others into it, and may be enabled to prepare the most suitable and profitable instruction for his people. Thus commending his whole work to God, and humbly relying on the Divine blessing, he will find much advantage in reading with attention, every thing, upon his proposed subject, that is within his reach, and in conversing upon it with well-informed and pious friends. No considerate Clergyman, who reflects upon the importance of the instruction and exhortation, which he is to deliver in the name of his Master, will think any pains too great, in preparing them.

6. From the earliest ages of the Church, the regular Catechizing of children has been considered among the most important duties of the spiritual teacher. The most distinguished Fathers earnestly recommended it by their own example; in all succeeding times, its general usage has been encouraged by the eulogies of the wise and the virtuous. At no period perhaps was it more necessary that the

young should be well grounded in their religious principles than it is at present. Assaults upon their faith were never more numerous, nor more various, nor pressed with more force and subtlety than they now are. Nothing, therefore, should be allowed to interrupt this necessary duty, nor can any other person so effectually discharge it as the zealous and affectionate Clergyman. He thus forms an acquaintance with the leading doctrines of Revelation, as they are rightly received and inculcated by the Church, in the youthful minds that are committed to his care, to grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength. And he thus sows the seed from which he may hope, by the blessing of the Lord of the harvest, to see beautiful plants of holiness bearing their fruit abundantly.

7. From the Catechizing of children we naturally turn to a consideration of the means for their more general instruction. From the earliest settlement of these Provinces, to the present time, it has been the kind endeavour of a benevolent Society in England, of whom I shall presently have occasion to speak more particularly, to encourage and assist the establishment of useful schools. These now receive liberal aid from our local Legislatures; and it is the duty of the Clergy to excite among their people an anxious desire and endeavour to co-operate in a work, which so nearly concerns the best interests of their children. Wherever the National System can be introduced without

violence to the opinions or prejudices of the people, it will be very desirable to adopt it, because its facilities for order and regularity, and for quick, and easy, and complete instruction, cannot be equalled by any other method¹. In giving every encouragement to as many schools as may be necessary for the instruction of *every* child in his parish, the Clergyman will be rightly regarded as a public benefactor.

9. But the Sunday School is entitled to his especial aid, and it is not too much to hope that through the instrumentality of the Clergy, such Schools will be established wherever a congregation can be assembled, and even in some places where no congregation has hitherto been collected. When these excellent institutions were first formed, they were intended, not only for religious instruction, and for security against the profanation of the Lord's day, but also to supply means for the general teaching of the poor,

¹ It may be gratifying to those who can appreciate the valuable services which have been rendered to a large portion of the world, by the indefatigable labours of the Rev. Dr. Bell, that his admirable system of instruction (for his venerable name should ever be associated with that which he has called the Madras System of Education), was first introduced into this Western world by the establishment of a National School at Halifax, in the year 1816. From that time it has been gradually overspreading these extensive colonies, and in some instances, has penetrated to the most retired settlements in the forest.

who must otherwise have been left in great ignorance.

The increase of daily schools in these Colonies, which has been promoted by the liberality of the Legislatures, might be considered, by some persons, as lessening the necessity for Sunday Schools. But as these afford the best opportunities for *Religious* Instruction, and promote a reverence for the Christian Sabbath, and its appropriate employments, they are perhaps more necessary than ever. For the plan of general education adopted in many of the daily Schools, might leave our children without adequate instruction in the religious principles which we love and revere, and consider of more importance than all other knowledge. It should therefore be impressed upon the parents of every rank and condition, in every parish, that all are alike interested in this great object; and that the affectionate connection thus early formed between the spiritual pastor and the younger portion of his flock, is likely to be of infinite value to them, as they grow in years, and pursue their course through this world of vanity and temptation. The Clergy cannot be too earnest in their efforts to introduce, establish, and increase these valuable institutions¹.

¹ As the Madras System, made known by Dr. Bell, was first introduced into America by its adoption in the National School

10. On the subject of pastoral visiting, it can hardly be necessary to say much to some of those whom I now especially address. Their experience must have supplied abundant evidence of its absolute necessity to the Clergyman, who has a just sense of his responsibility, and a desire to possess the warm affection of his people, that he may be instrumental to their happiness in time and in eternity. His intercourse with every individual under his charge should be constant, intimate, and affectionate. His approach to every dwelling in his parish should lighten up the countenances of those who are within it, as when they receive their most welcome guest. Young and old, of every rank and degree, should feel that they have an interest in his visits, which should always be made engaging and instructive to all of them. They will soon discover whatever real concern he feels in their welfare, and he will be

at Halifax, so it is believed Sunday Schools were first introduced into the same quarter of the world, by their establishment in the same parish. When the first Colonial Bishop, appointed by the British Government, took charge of the Diocese of Nova Scotia, in the year 1787, he immediately established two Sunday Schools at Halifax. They are now happily to be seen in every part of America. Many in this Diocese are admirably conducted, and produce the greatest benefit. None can be more excellently managed than some are, which are now in operation in the islands of Bermudas. *See Note at the end, in reference to Sunday Schools, for the coloured people in those islands.*

received as the friend, the counsellor, and the parental guide. Whether his lot be cast in the most retired settlement in the forest, or in the most crowded town, this duty is equally incumbent upon him, and its value will be alike realized in every situation. The familiar acquaintance it will obtain for him, with the temporal and spiritual condition of every one entrusted to his care, will increase the means of his usefulness to an extent that cannot easily be measured, and enable him to minister most effectually to every want.

But great as is the benefit which the faithful shepherd is thus enabled to confer upon the individuals of his flock, let it not be thought that the advantages of the visit belong solely to the persons who receive it. Nothing, perhaps, is more beneficial and instructive to the visitor himself. Here fruitful topics are suggested to him for his public as well as his private counsel and admonition. Here he learns the maladies to which the spiritual physician is to apply the heavenly healing with equal comfort to himself and to his patient.

Has he, from the infirmities of his nature, hours of dejection, and, perhaps, an inclination to discontent and repining? Let him repair to the abode of real suffering and distress, and his heart will be moved to contrition for his own unthankfulness. While he endeavours to administer consolation to the sufferer, he will have his gratitude awakened for the manifold blessings which are

dispensed to himself. Is he disturbed by any of the trifling cares and disappointments, which, if indulged, are sure to ruffle the calm that ought to be preserved in the Christian mind, and especially in the mind of the Christian Minister? Let him hasten to the bed of the sick, or the dying; and while he points to the only source of support and solace, and labours to fill the sick man's heart with Christian faith, and patience, and hope, and joy, this passing world's disquietudes will appear at once in all their proper insignificance; and with his heart and affections recalled to better things, he will return from this improving scene composed and rejoicing. Let the Christian Pastor make the necessary duty of affectionately visiting his flock his constant business, and he will soon find it equally full of profit and delight to them and to himself. On this head I would only add a recommendation that every Clergyman should keep some record of his visits, with an account of the various spiritual cases which are brought within his knowledge, and of the treatment they receive from him, which will greatly assist him in the future discharge of similar duties.

11. I would next call your attention, my reverend brethren, to our connection with that venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, whose praise has been in the Church for nearly an hundred and thirty years. When the vast continent we inhabit was nearly destitute of

means for religious instruction, that benevolent body extended their kind and fostering care to its inhabitants, and through the blessing of God upon their charitable exertions, the light, and consolations, and hopes of the Gospel were brought to thousands who were sitting in the desponding sorrows of darkness. The early inhabitants of the neighbouring States which are now separated from the British empire, long ago felt and gratefully acknowledged the blessings that were derived from the liberality of that Society, and at the present time these form the frequent theme of praise and gratitude among their children.

In a still greater degree have the aid and the prayers of that Society been extended on behalf of these favoured Colonies. From the earliest occupation of them by the British Government they have been objects for their pious care ; and as they have increased their population and extended their settlements, they have received larger measures of the Society's bounty. Many schools which were open to all the children who could attend them, were assisted by the Society for half a century before the Provincial Legislatures could aid them, and in places where, without this help, no school could have been supported. Missionaries were sent to places that were destitute of religious instruction ; and the Word of God, and other excellent books were liberally bestowed

wherever the want of them was ascertained. These good works have been continued to our provinces for nearly eighty years with constant increase, and have always been prompted by the single desire of being humbly instrumental in promoting the temporal and eternal happiness of our people.

We know how insufficiently the Church would be supported among us if the bounty of this Society were withdrawn, and yet it may be doubted whether a large portion even of our own communion have any accurate knowledge of what this Society have done, and are now doing ; or any adequate feelings of gratitude for their benevolence and their bounty. To remedy so great an evil, I would request every Missionary to address his congregation upon this subject, at least once in every year, that they may be made acquainted with the extent of the favours and the blessings they receive, and excited to becoming gratitude. On these occasions it cannot be doubted that all will be ready to commend this benevolent Society, and their great work of Christian love, to the protection and blessing of the Almighty. The anniversary of the Society has been publicly observed in England for more than a century, on the *third Friday of every February* ; and I would propose that the duty I recommend should be performed on *the Sunday next after that day* in each year. Nor can I omit

to express a hope that every individual among our people will be desirous to make his humble offering to the treasury of such a Society.

12. The pious work of this charitable body has been assisted by an institution of similar character, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, who have provided the Bibles and other books that have been circulated, and have also made munificent donations in the British Colonies. To avail ourselves of the full benefit which this Society offers, it is very expedient that a District Committee should be formed, and a lending library established in every Mission. These have already been formed with great success in many parts of the Diocese, and the result is very encouraging to their universal adoption. However small the committees may be at first in numbers and in means, they will be sure of such assistance and co-operation as will make them, with God's blessing, eminently useful, wherever they may be established. Of late years, it has been in accordance with the general inclination to encourage societies of various names, and for numerous purposes. While we hope that such of them as are instruments of good, and are furthering the kingdom of the Redeemer, may receive his blessing, there can be no doubt on the mind of any person that we are most especially bound to unite, and, according to our means, to co-operate with those great Societies, who have for so many years been

dispensing signal and substantial benefits to these Colonies. These ancient institutions were formed in an age when the taste and fashion of the time lent them no aid. They were the genuine offspring of Christian charity. Their work was carried on, with much lowliness of mind, and without any effort to attract the notice and applause of the world, or any desire for other assistance than should be prompted in silence, and almost in secrecy, by religious benevolence.— They were contented if the blessing distributed by one hand, should be scarcely known by the other. All their endeavours, however, were continually and fervently commended to Him, who seeth in secret, and it has pleased Him to bless their pious designs, and in a wonderful manner to raise up friends for them, and provide means for their widely extended and daily increasing charities, even when many associations, of the most attractive appearance, have been diligently soliciting the attentions, and almost exhausting the beneficence of the public. But the peculiar claim which these two Church Societies have upon the gratitude, affection, and support of every member of our communion, will be readily acknowledged by all who love the Church, and will be gladly answered to the utmost of their power. Indeed, a strict and affectionate regard to these Societies, and to the institutions which are closely united with them; and earnest endeavours for their sup-

port and extension, are beginning to be considered, in some measure, as tests of zeal, both in our Clergy and Laity, and of their soundness in the faith.

13. While endeavouring to engage your attention, my brethren, to the various duties of your honourable calling, I must not omit to press upon your notice one more topic, which all will regard as highly important. I allude to the *character* which is affixed to every one of you as a Missionary, and the extraordinary zeal and self-devotion, which are required from you in that capacity.

There may be other countries in which less devotion to the duties of his office may enable a Clergyman to be the instrument of good. But in every part of this Diocese, a Clergyman who could satisfy himself with a decent attention to the mere ordinary routine of official duty, so as barely to save himself from the charge of absolute neglect, and had nothing of the Missionary's spirit, could effect little, if any thing, for the benefit of those who are committed to his care.— Here, if he desires to do the work of his Divine Master, he must more closely imitate His blessed example. He must go about continually, through every portion of his charge, seeking and creating opportunities for doing good. As new duties will arise with every day's approach, it will be in vain

for him to look forward to a time of rest. His course must be pursued, with unabated zeal and diligence, while life is continued to him.

You well know there is not a Missionary station in the several provinces which constitute this Diocese (for even those stations which contain the largest towns are not to be excepted), where there are not settlements, especially inviting the Missionary's zeal, because they would be cut off from the means of religious instruction if his care were withheld from them. Many of you can testify from experience, that it is not uncommon for persons residing within ten, or fifteen, or twenty miles of the large towns, to send, even in violent storms, to request the ministry of the word and sacraments, in cases of emergency. In some Missions, similar calls are made from settlements still farther distant from the Missionary's home. It is a subject for our rejoicing, that the people are instructed thus to value the offices of the Church; and it is matter for equal joy that such calls are gladly answered, without any consideration of the toil and personal inconvenience which they may occasion. But a little enquiry would shew, that such calls are rarely, perhaps never, made from places where they have not been prompted by previous visits of Christian love from the Missionary. Even this fruit of his labour is sufficient encouragement for his perse-

verance ; encouragement that should make him willing to employ his whole strength, and exhaust it in such honourable service.

If the faithful Missionary, in his zeal for the work allotted to him by his heavenly Master, should so exhaust his strength, that his few days should be in some small measure shortened, he only goes a little sooner to reap the sure reward from mercy, and he will bless the Lord for such disposal of him. But woe to that person, who would preserve his health and strength entire, and protract his life to its utmost limits, if the purchase of such health and extended life must be made by any neglect of the souls committed to him. How extravagantly does he overrate the value of a few years of wretched existence here, which, after all his care, must rapidly pass away ; and how sadly does he underrate the value of immortal souls !

Fear not then, beloved Missionaries, to be worn out in the service of so gracious a Master as we acknowledge. Go on, rejoicing amid its severest labours, that you have been thought worthy of such toil for the Gospel. Offer up your strength, your health, your life itself, if such should be the will of God, and count the offering as your richest gain. Let every one of us, Bishop and Priest alike, be a *Missionary*, in the fullest meaning of the name, and humbly rejoicing in our character and office, let us *thank God, and take courage*.

Great is the want, which all of us know and

deeply lament, of more labourers, more Missionary labourers, in this portion of the Christian vineyard. May the hands of those who would gladly supply all our necessities be strengthened by largely increased assistance. May the Spirit of the Lord animate all who shall contribute to so noble a purpose, and all who shall be engaged as the labourers in this great work. May He be our protector in every peril ; cheer all our exertions ; enable us by His strength to fulfil all His blessed purposes ; and whether, in His infinite wisdom, He may see fit to lengthen or abridge the period of our employment here, may He, of His infinite mercy, and for the sake of the only and ever blessed Mediator, vouchsafe to receive ourselves, and all committed to our care, to His glorious presence, in His everlasting kingdom, where, with angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven, we may be permitted to join in praise and thanksgiving to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one undivided and adorable Godhead, blessed for ever. Amen.

NOTE.

THE condition of Bermudas is, in many respects, so different from that of the rest of the Diocese of Nova Scotia, that some mention of it seems proper in this place.

The Clergy in these islands are not Missionaries from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, but Rectors of regularly constituted Parishes; and their support, which is as slender as that of the Missionaries, is derived, partly from the people, and partly from the Treasury of the Colony.

Some of the Sunday Schools in these islands are admirably conducted by the ladies who superintend them. Each lady takes charge of a class, and considers it her duty, in the course of the week, to see any member of it, who was absent on the previous Sunday; and, if necessary, to expostulate with the parents as well as the child, upon the importance of the duties which are thus neglected. The happiest effect is produced by the Christian spirit and affection that are cultivated by such intercourse, and the example is worthy of imitation.

But the large portion of coloured persons, bond and free, which is to be found here, creates the principal distinction between this and other parts of the Diocese. The slaves are treated very kindly, and there is a general willingness on the part of their masters, to acquiesce, and often to co-operate, in their instruction, and more especially their religious instruction. Difficulties sometimes occur, but they may generally be removed, if they are rightly met. In the course of the last five years, there has been much progress in this good work. At the commencement of that period, there was not a coloured person in the islands, as I have been informed, receiving regular instruction in connection with the Church of England; at the close of it, no less than *seven hundred* were enjoying that privilege. In speaking of Schools, and more particularly of Sunday Schools, the following observations were addressed to the Clergy of Bermudas:—

“ In extending the benefits which these institutions are well calculated to afford, with the advantages of a limited education,

to the *coloured population* of these islands, the *will* readily acknowledge the duty that is imposed upon *.,* and cheerfully perform it.

" This, indeed, may be considered as a subject of some delicacy and difficulty, in reference to the manner in which it is to be effected. That prejudices have existed on this point cannot be denied; but it would be very indiscreet to contend against them, in any other spirit than that of meekness and patience. In the few cases in which this desirable work may be opposed, we must endeavour to convince the judgment, and persuade the inclination of those who differ from us. Our measures must all be moderate, and we must be satisfied with progress that will not be the less sure because it may not be so rapid as we might wish. If its good effect shall be manifested in the improvement of the character and conduct of the servant, no master will long oppose our discreet exertions. But if our work is so badly executed, through our indolence or unskillfulness, that no such improvement is visible, we cannot reasonably expect the co-operation we require. To secure the best effect to our labour, it must be continually commended to the heavenly blessing. The attention of the Clergy must be given to it incessantly. The servant must be encouraged to look up to him at all times, as his spiritual friend and counsellor; and while he is instructed in his duty to God, he will be powerfully taught how entirely that duty must influence all his behaviour to his earthly master, and his whole conduct in that state of life, in which it has pleased God to place him.

" In this manner too, the importance will soon be apparent, of encouraging the happy inclination which now very generally prevails among the people of colour, in these islands, to receive their religious instruction in connection with that Church, to which their earthly superiors belong."

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